



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Klamath Basin Area Office

6600 Washburn Way

Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603

IN REPLY REFER TO:

KO-300 (JHoblit)

ENV-7.00

OCT 22 2007

Subject: Final Biological Assessment on Klamath Project Operations from 2008 to 2018

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Reclamation has enclosed a courtesy copy of the Final Biological Assessment (BA) on the proposed operations of the Klamath Project from 2008 to 2018. The Klamath Project is located in south-central Oregon and northeastern California. Reclamation has determined that the proposed operation of the Klamath Project during the years 2008 to 2018 may affect species listed pursuant to the ESA (50 CFR 402.12(k)) and has requested formal ESA Section 7(a)(2) consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Services).

The proposed action in the enclosed BA includes maintaining a minimum flow of 1300 cubic feet per second (cfs) in the Klamath River below Iron Gate Dam for the months of October through February, as contained in the Phase III, Dry Year flows as described in Table 9 of the 2002 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Biological Opinion (BO). However, in an effort to provide maximum flexibility to meet coho salmon needs, we are evaluating the impacts of reducing the minimum flow discharge during these months at Iron Gate Dam from the proposed 1,300 cfs to 1,000 cfs during the months of October through February, and reducing late summer flows. This reduction in the minimum flow would provide the opportunity to shift available water to the March through June period, which corresponds with the out-migration of coho salmon smolt. We will be providing further information regarding this modification to the proposed action and its effects at a later date and will work with the Services, as well as other interested parties, to further refine and analyze this potential flow regime during the formal consultation process.

We believe all information necessary to initiate formal consultation has been provided and anticipate the Biological Opinion will be concluded within the regulatory timeframe of 135 days from the Services' receipt of the attached Final BA, to ensure Section 7(a)(2) consultation is completed prior to the 2008 irrigation season. We are looking forward to continued consultation and exchange of information with the Services during this timeframe.

The Final BA will also be posted on our website, [www.usbr.gov/mp/KBAO](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/KBAO). If you have any questions, please contact Christine Karas at (541) 883-6935.

Sincerely,

Pablo R. Arroyave  
Area Manager

Enclosure

cc: See next page.

cc: Continued from previous page.

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